

Safety and Aesthetics in Urban Roadway Design
Interdisciplinary Group Meeting
November 6, 2003, 9:00 to 2:30 p.m.
WSDOT Lakewood Maintenance Facility - Conference Room

Members in attendance:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Agency</u>	<u>Phone</u>
Dave Olson	WSDOT – HQ Design Office	360-705-7952
Jim Seitz	Association of Washington Cities	360-753-4137
King Cushman	Puget Sound Regional Council	206-464-6174
Paul Harker	Federal Highway Administration	360-753-9552
Al King	County Road Administration Board	360-664-3299
Anna St. Martin	WSDOT – HQ Design Office	360-705-7453
Bill Stoll	WSDOT – HQ Design Office	360-705-7247
Mike Johnson	City of Seattle – Roadway Design	206-684-5187
Mark Maurer	WSDOT – HQ Design Office	360-705-7242
Rich Meredith	City of Shoreline	206-546-2403
Steve Fuchs	WSDOT – Tumwater Design	360-570-6602
Bruce Smith	WSDOT – HQ Enviro. Services Office	360-705-7493
Dick Albin	WSDOT – HQ Design Office	360-705-7451
Brian Hasselbach	WSDOT – HQ Design Office	360-705-7255

Brian Hasselbach welcomed everyone to the meeting and requested that the attendees introduce themselves. He distributed the revised agenda and asked for any additions or alterations to the agenda.

WSDOT's Context Sensitive Solutions Executive Order: The members suggested the group begin with this agenda item, prior to discussing the content of the companion document. Dave explained that the Department has been working on the development of an Executive Order, which will clarify the Department's position on CSS and its use in the Department's daily activities. Dave noted that the Executive Order is currently being reviewed and will likely be available by the middle of December.

The group discussed the need to include the Executive Order as a reference in the companion document (suggested Section II-1-3, page II-4 as an appropriate location), as directional guidance for the continuation of efforts like the companion document and the IDG.

Companion Document Title: Brian discussed the need to finalize a title for the companion document. Given the document's progression, efforts are underway to begin the marketing of the document. Given this, it will be more useful to have a title set, which can be referenced in future presentations and articles.

Brian presented a list of the suggested titles received to date and requested members consider their top choices. The group discussed some additional title suggestions –

merging some of the suggested ones with new ideas. The group discussed the merits of each and suggested the importance of recognizing that the intent of the document is to:

- discuss the various considerations associated with specific design aspects
- raise awareness of the trade-offs associated with each consideration
- lead to well-informed decision-making

With that, the group agreed to the following title for the document: “Understanding Flexibility in Transportation Design – Washington”.

Companion Document Work Session

Current Status: Brian started this discussion with a brief overview of the status of the document and progress to date.

Brian noted that the bulk of the companion document content is completed. A couple of chapters are still outstanding, but most are noted throughout the document with brief explanations of the chapter’s status. Brian explained his and Anna’s efforts in completing a comprehensive edit of the document – seeking to streamline the existing content, reduce redundancy between chapters and sections, and begin the technical editing of the document. Brian noted that he has been working with the Design Office’s technical editor to begin that portion of the process.

Brian also pointed out the creation of a new section to the document – Section VIII Applying the Considerations – to the document. Brian explained that this chapter was prompted from Rocky’s suggestions at the last IDG meeting and serves as a good tool in tying the previous sections together and illustrating the application of considerations, in a variety of environments. Brian noted that the section is incomplete, as no case studies were included in the section. Brian requested assistance from the group in identifying appropriate case studies, to correspond with each of the environments Rocky suggested.

Finally, Brian noted that a number of graphics and illustrations had also been included in the most recent draft. He thanked Anna for her work in developing a large photo library for use in the companion document.

Comments and Discussion on the Draft: Brian then opened the discussion to comments on the draft document. Brian noted that, while there is an interest in detailed, specific comments, the intent of the discussion is to go through each chapter and identify whether or not the overall content is appropriate and, more importantly, if there are any aspects that folks believe to be inappropriate or are glaringly missing.

The group developed the following summarized list of comments on the document:

General comments:

- re-format the Executive Summary as a stand alone section and begin “Division” headings with the Introduction

- the group complimented the efforts to remove any language from the text that may be construed as judgmental, but noted that some additional effort is needed (e.g., p. III-14)
- group suggested removing the “Division” wording and simply use tabs to divide sections within the document
- group suggested not re-starting the chapter numbering with each new division – instead simply advance the chapter number from start to finish
- delete the word “all” from “Balancing All Considerations” chapter sub-headings
- explore the opportunity to delete chapter sub-headings in Divisions where all the sub-headings are consistent (e.g., the Design Considerations section)
- group suggested adding page numbers to the Table of Contents

Introduction – (currently Division II)

- Expand the intent of the document – reference CSS EO, reaffirm that the document is not a design document, reaffirm goals of document, and define the audience. Note that the document simply supplements DOT’s *Design* and *Local Agency Guidelines Manuals*.
- Note that the document was developed in a collaborative manner, DOT’s intent to proceed forward with CSS EO, and recommend use of this document by both Department and local agency personnel. (The group discussed whether or not there is a need to seek formal endorsement of the document by those agencies on the IDG. After discussion, the group decided to forgo formal endorsement and simply note the collaborative effort in the development of the document.)
- identify how the inter-governmental relationships occur outside of the design process
- add CSS language to the introduction
- change photo of Bellingham’s Lakeway Drive to a more urban example
- add bullets to the “Additional Resources” sections
- define “Community-Based Approach”
- search for the word “urban” in the document and delete or revise (The group discussed the original focus of the document on urban state highways, but recognized that the considerations may be applied to any environment, if properly evaluated and considered. Particularly given the expanded environments in Section VIII, the group agreed to remove the term “urban” – recognizing that most of the content will still focus on urban settings though.)
- add in the specific language of the WTP’s Goals 9 and 10 (p. II-4)

Division III

- add Centennial Accord and WSDOT Tribal Coordination guidance documents to the list of Governing Regulations
- use the federal regulations for definitions on “consultation” and add definitions for “coordination” and “HSS”
- identify Section III-1-5-1 as “Local Comprehensive Plans” and Section III-1-5-3 as “State Route Development Plans”

- re-structure sections to ensure logical progression – recognizing that local plans need to be certified by regional plans, which fold into the WTP
 - King volunteered to assist in the development of a “regional plan” section
- add “and Stakeholders” to section III-1-6 title
- Figure III-1.1 – Add “parking” and “curb and gutter” as considerations to this chart. Use the Traffic Calming charts as an example for modifying this chart.
- Funding Constraints section: remove the specific numbers – limit the discussion only to the sources of funding and constraints.
 - Expand the discussion on other sources of funding and limitations (CRAB, TIB, etc.)
 - Al volunteered to assist with a re-working of the language.
 - Note that all state highways are not equal – HSS will receive higher priority for funding.
 - King noted that Chris Picard has developed some good info regarding this for PSRC.
 - Expand discussions to other non-typical funding sources.
- Need to add more references to the detailed explanation of the project development process.
- group suggested changing the title and intent of Chapter III-3 to Environmental Partnerships, instead of Connections (Brian and Bruce briefly discussed the intent of this chapter and Bruce agreed to confer further with Shari.)

Division IV:

- group suggested pulling out “parking” as a stand alone element of roadway components

Division V:

- group suggested the need to include references, if any text suggests a mandate or requirement (p. V-1)
- need to clarify the use of “anticipated” vs. “normal” for design vehicle considerations
 - Add some language as to how this works in practice – do we really design to the “largest vehicle anticipated”?
- clarify that content is just guidance
- add in references to AASHTO and simulation models for developing turning radii
- add photos to Chapter V-2
 - particularly one showing tacking on sidewalks and large turn radii resulting in increased pedestrian crossing lengths
- add in pedestrian and bicycle chapters (Dave suggested adding stand alone chapters for pedestrians and bicycles – pulling out sections from the *Design Manual*.)
- need some examples of access management and control
- need to add in discussion on sight distance and application – particularly on state routes – under the Parking chapter
 - Oregon Main St. handbook – graphic regarding speeds and what the driver sees may work well in the companion document, with permission

- Stopping vs. decision stopping distance
 - Need to discuss trade-offs associated with each
 - Explain why the standard was developed in the manner it was – what was the basis for the decision-making?
- need to add language that discusses how to deal with fixed objects in the urban environment
 - include the references listed in the Design Clear Zone supplement in the “Additional Resources” section
- expand exclusive bus lanes section include BAT lanes, etc. w/the associated trade-offs
 - qualify that the chapter is pertinent to roadway transit (acknowledge there are other types like rail transit, etc.)
 - Balancing Considerations section – include bus stop locations, getting pedestrians from one side of the street to the other
 - Safety

Division VII

(Dick and Brian briefly explained the intent of this chapter and some of the draft language John is developing for it.)

- need to tie in specific considerations with respect to CSS – detail the “negatives” of using flexibility
- reference the local’s existing liability – particularly with efforts like the In-Service agreement – flexibility is gained, but so is liability

Brian noted that additional comments and thoughts are welcome and urged committee members to submit comments, as soon as possible.

Other Issues Identified: Given current progression of the companion document, the group discussed the need to augment the current marketing efforts on the document and the Safety & Aesthetics IDG. The group suggested an update on the document be issued to coincide with the release of the Department’s Context Sensitive Solutions Executive Order.

The group also suggested taking advantage of existing groups and forums – such as Local Programs’ City/County Design Standards Committee, etc. A number of groups are likely discussing the same issues the IDG has been tackling – we need to improve our efforts in coordinating with those groups and keeping them up to date on the IDG’s efforts.

Training Update: Dave informed the group that development of a Context-Sensitive Solutions training is progressing. Dave noted that the Design Office and Local Programs, working with FHWA’s WA Division, were successful in securing \$75,000 of federal funds to assist with the development of the training curriculum. Dave noted that the Design Office is contributing an additional \$20,000 and the Association of Washington Cities has been approached for additional funds.

Dave noted that a small working group, consisting of representatives from the Design Office, Local Programs, and FHWA, are working on the development of objectives for the training course. Dave also noted that the group will select a consultant, who will be tasked with developing the course curriculum, in the near future.

Dave noted that the training will be offered to DOT personnel, local agencies, and consultants.

Miscellaneous: Dick suggested a need to re-evaluate the direction and intent of the IDG. He noted that the group had originally brainstormed a laundry list of issues and action items, but most of those have been completed or are nearing completion. He suggested that it might be a good opportunity to discuss the future direction of the group at the next meeting.

Dave also noted that today's meeting is Brian's last meeting as the chair of the Safety & Aesthetics IDG, as he has accepted a promotional opportunity with the Department's Highways & Local Programs. Dave noted that Brian will be continuing to assist with the development of the companion document, but any future comments or questions can be directed to him or Anna.

Wrap Up: Given the announcement under the "Miscellaneous" section, the next IDG meeting will be scheduled and announced in the future.

Action Items:

- Anna will send out an e-mail with an updated project schedule for the document.
- IDG members need to complete comments on document and return to Dave Olson, as soon as possible.
- Members may submit any suggestions for case studies (for the new Section VIII) to Dave Olson.